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ABSTRACT

This document contains two papers on library services for children which were presented at the 1985 International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) conference. In "Children's Services of Public Libraries in the United States," Selma K. Richardson (United States) discusses goals and guidelines which have been prepared nationally for public library services to children. As an example of the diversity of the extent and quality of these services within each state, the children's services and programs of one state (Illinois) are described. Excerpts from guidelines for children's services prepared by other state associations are included. In "Books? We Don't Have Any. A Report on the IFLA/UNESCO Books for All Co-Action Project," Margaret R. Marshall (United Kingdom) discusses the activities of this project aimed at enabling libraries and organizations in book-needy countries to obtain children's books appropriate to their needs. Samples of letters from various countries requesting aid are given to provide a picture of some of the difficulties. The paper also includes a discussion of the project administration. (THC)

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IFLA
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IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, CHICAGO

Division: Libraries Serving the General Public

Section: Children's Libraries

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Children's Services of Public Libraries in the United States

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ABSTRACT

Goals and guidelines prepared "nationally" for public library service (including children's services) are discussed. In the United States the extent and quality of public library services are determined, by and large, by the local unit of government. As a result there is great variety in children's services. As an example of this diversity, the children's services (including programs) of one state (Illinois) are described. Quotes are shared from guidelines for children's services prepared by other state associations.

The theme of this conference, "Libraries and the Universal Availability of Information," is intended to allow for discussion of a variety of topics. During our brief time together I shall try to touch upon a few facets of one exceedingly broad subject: children's services in public libraries of the United States. In doing so it is my intent, first of all, to share with you some statements that might be characterized as "national" because they are generally accepted by the library profession (some have been adopted by the American Library Association [ALA]); however, I hasten to add that the statements have not been formally adopted by state or federal legislatures. Even at this early point I emphasize that it is the local unit of government, whether large city or small town, that exercises control over public library services and determines the extent and quality of services within the governmental unit. Secondly, it is my plan to share with you some of the purposes of children's services that may be found in print; thirdly, to suggest the diversity and variety of public library services, with an emphasis on children's services, in one of our 50 states; and lastly, to talk about some of the programs offered by children's services in public libraries.

The "Library Bill of Rights," which was prepared by ALA and subsequently adopted by many local public libraries, affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas. Six policies are enumerated in the statement; here are the first sentences of two: "(1) Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. (2) Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues." Using the words of the theme of this conference one might say, the profession believes that information should be available to the "universe" served by libraries.

Of particular significance to us is a word tucked into article 5: age. "A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views." To clarify the meaning of this policy, ALA adopted an interpretation of article 5 entitled "Free Access to Libraries for Minors," which explains that young people are entitled to the same access to the materials and services of libraries as adults. Within the interpretation are named some of the practices that in effect deny access to minors. These unacceptable "restrictions" suggest some of the reasons a statement was necessary: "restricted reading rooms for adult use only, library cards limiting circulation of some materials to adults only, closed collections for adult use only, collections limited to teacher use, or restricted according to a student's grade level, and interlibrary loan service for adult use only."

During the past decade there has been an important development in the public library field which has, of course, significance to children's services. In the 1970s it was recognized that earlier standards for public library service were in some ways no longer appropriate because they failed to focus on meeting the conditions and needs of local communities. From this concern and committee deliberations evolved The Public Library Mission Statement and Its Imperatives for Service. Particularly pertinent for our purposes is a sentence in the summary paragraphs of the mission statement. "The public library considers the entire spectrum of knowledge to be its purview, and it considers the entire spectrum of the community as its user population."[1] Might we recast this sentence to read, all children in a community should have access to information through the public library?

The working definitions of "access" and "information" in the Mission Statement are all embracing and assure that some of the specifics about children's services I shall mention later are in keeping with both the intents of the public library in the United States and the theme of this conference.

"Information includes not only the sum total of recorded human experience--factual, imaginative, scientific, and humanistic--but also the unrecorded experience which is available only from human resources to which library users may be referred." Thus, the definition of information goes much beyond data and short answers. "Access now implies innovative, imaginative delivery techniques which overcome geographic, educational, physical, and psychological barriers, as well as convenient location and schedule."[2] Programming sponsored by children's services is, for my purposes, a "delivery technique" by which children are introduced to the materials of the collection. The universe of information is made more readily accessible through programs planned by children's librarians.

To aid the local community in its efforts to identify and analyze its own needs and to determine the priorities of its public library, another book was published, A Planning Process for Public Libraries.[3] The work is not without controversy; however, let me briefly note that a commendable aspect of the process is the involvement of the citizenry, and yet, this involvement (not to mention other procedures) does require considerable time. Nevertheless, the message is clear: it is at the local level the nature and direction of public library services are determined.

Although it now falls upon the local public library to specify goals, it is not impossible to trace the lineage of some of the written statements about children's services, as well as recently published guidelines for certain states, to six aims shaped by Long in 1953: "(1) to make a wide and varied collection of books easily and temptingly available; (2) to give guidance to children in their choice of books and materials; (3) to share, extend, and cultivate the enjoyment of reading as a voluntary, individual pursuit; (4) to encourage lifelong education through the use of public library resources; (5) to help the child develop to the full his personal ability and his social

understanding; (6) to serve as a social force in the community together with other agencies concerned with the child's welfare."[4]

While it is tempting to note the innumerable connections to these statements, by way of example, consider the first and last of five paragraphs under "Philosophy of Service" in the recently issued Standards for New York. "Every young person, from infancy through the teen years, should have available an accessible, free public library which provides appropriate materials, resources, and reader guidance to meet informational and recreational needs. Library service for youth, a vital and integral part of public library service, contributes to individual growth and development. Services that are available for adult users should be provided for children and young adults." The fifth paragraph: "Providing excellent library service for youth builds a clientele of young people today and a foundation of public support for libraries in the future. Providing access to knowledge broadens the minds of young people, stimulates their imaginations, and expands their horizons. These positive and enriching experiences will have an impact on individuals, their society, and their world."[5]

By way of summarizing the first two parts of this paper, I would observe that (1) statements and aids about public library service have been developed "nationally" and (2) worthy purposes for children's services have been stated in print; however, it remains for the local public library to choose whether or not to accept these ideals. The local public library is urged to state its own goals and means of attaining them. Standards are not imposed upon the local unit. Even so, goals shaped locally tend to be in keeping with generally accepted principles and rights.

Let us now look into, albeit in a cursory fashion, some of the results of local control. How have children's services fared within public libraries? One result, in brief, is that there is great diversity in the character of

public library services in the United States, and specifically children's services.

Although there is no state or federal law (to my knowledge) that mandates library service, most towns and cities have chosen to underwrite public libraries. The citizens that serve on the local governing board (not to be confused with the position of librarian) are locally appointed or elected and reside within the community. The money by which the public library operates is obtained primarily through taxes that are levied locally, usually on property (real estate). (State governments and the federal government often make available additional funding for improving library resources, but the local unit is not required to seek these funds.) Evidence of the varying amounts of money that are available or allocated locally can easily be noted by simply viewing the exteriors of public library buildings. Diversity is evident even in the buildings that followed Carnegie blueprints. Thus, traveling in this country, one is likely to see library buildings that range from the magnificent edifices of large cities to the one-room cabins of resort areas and any number of examples between such extremes. (Incidentally, boundary lines of public school districts are not necessarily the same as those for the municipal public library and, it follows, the governing boards and tax bases would be different. No attempt will be made to discuss school libraries in this paper, or even public and school library cooperation.)

With regard to children's services, there is no fully delineated national statistical picture. Data have simply not been gathered. Goldhor noted that a 1974 U.S. Office of Education form for the collection of public library data did not contain one item dealing specifically with children's work among its 53 questions. His study of compilations of public library statistics published by state agencies showed that only 2% of 1,111 items were about children's services.[6] In a recent conversation he said the situation has not much changed. Lynch provides further details about the present situation in her

discussion of the lack of "Statistics on Library Services to Youth."[7]

To allow me a manageable framework, and yet without compromising the national diversity, I should like to focus on children's services in one of the fifty states. The state selected has pertinence for several reasons: (1) the state has made some studies of children's services, (2) it typifies (although not proportionally) the social, economic, and political diversity of the United States with regard to commerce and industry, agriculture, urban and rural areas, personal income, ethnic groups, local tax bases, to name a few characteristics, and (3) it is the state in which you are now sitting. You would be able to find the diversity in library services I shall attempt to describe even if you went no further than 50 miles from this room.

There are approximately 600 public libraries in Illinois. About 50% of these libraries serve communities with populations under 5,000. One public library (and its nearly eighty branches) serves Chicago. Almost one-fifth of the population of the state has not elected to be taxed for library services; these people live primarily in rural areas and very small towns.

In a 1977 survey of children's services of public libraries in Illinois, it was found that (1) the children's room is open an average of 41 hours per week; the range extends from 4 hours to 77 hours; (2) expenditures for children's books and magazines represent an average of 28% of the total expenditures for books and magazines of the libraries; (3) children's books represent 33% of the total book collection of the libraries, ranging from 3% to 89%; (4) the average number of children's books in the collections is about 10,000, ranging from 200 volumes to 78,000 volumes; one-third of the children's collections have over 10,000 volumes (two-thirds under 10,000); (5) children's materials account for 37% of the total circulation of the libraries (which is quite remarkable in view of the fact that 21% of the state population is under age 14); and (6) on the average, ten children's magazine titles are subscribed to by the libraries, ranging from none to 65.[8]

This same study looked more closely at 32 public libraries, selected for the quality of their children's services. In this part of the study it was possible to investigate many facets of children's services, but I mention here only three findings that help to fill out that picture of diversity, even within a select sample. Among the 32 libraries it was found that (1) the estimates of the percent of the net area of the libraries allocated to children's services average 26, ranging from 8 to 50%; (2) slightly over half of the 32 children's librarians hold a graduate degree in library science; one-fourth have not earned a bachelor's degree; and (3) three-fourths of the children's librarians belong to the state library association and the section for children's librarians of public libraries; half of the librarians belong to ALA and the division of interest to librarians serving children.[9]

A sketchy, and certainly incomplete, picture of children's services in one state has been drawn to suggest the diversity in facilities, collections, and staff. Now let us turn to some specific services offered by children's services. Some would consider developing the collection a service. Whether it is or not I shall not attempt to delve into the matters or issues of selection, cataloging, types of media, budgeting, or censorship. No less important for my not dwelling on it, is reference service. Estimates run as high as 90% with regard to the "public" time that children's librarians spend in responding to questions. Much service to children is individualized. This vital reference work, although certainly mentioned in guidelines, does not seem to be reported as frequently in the literature, save for one recent compilation, Reference Services for Children and Young Adults.[10] There are, however, innumerable articles reporting programs in the professional journals.

Despite other diversities, there is relatively high agreement regarding the importance of programs (a planned activity, usually for groups), whether in the literature, in practice, or even job descriptions. The Youth Services

librarians in the New York Standards state the matter succinctly and reflect a prevailing attitude: "Every library, regardless of size, should offer programs for the children of the community in addition to those offered for school visits." "All programs should be designed to attract children to the library and its materials."[11] With regard to the number it is urged that where there is a full-time children's librarian, there should be a minimum of four programs a month.

There are neither national statistical studies about the extent of programming nor solid research studies about the effectiveness of programming (or the cost effectiveness of time spent by librarians in planning programs). Some information about the extent of programming, however, has been obtained through a survey in Illinois. Among a representative sample of public libraries (unfortunately excluding Chicago Public Library) it was found that in very few libraries were there no children's programs of any kind.[12] The survey yields some findings about story hours, film programs, and summer reading clubs.

With regard to story hours the study shows that 85% of the libraries in the state have at least one story hour for children during a year. Those libraries that do not are, by and large, serving populations under 5,000. Of those libraries that do offer story hours, the average number of story hours in a year per library is 33. In libraries serving populations under 5,000, the average number is 9; in populations over 25,000, the average is 95.[13] When analyzed by sections of the state, the average for the Chicago suburbs is 71; for "downstate" libraries, under 30 per year.[14]

Story hours have been offered in U.S. libraries for many years. They take various forms and are likely to include storytelling, reading aloud, puppetry, finger plays, songs, films, and filmstrips. Holiday and seasonal programs are quite popular, however, countless themes have been used for other programs. All types of stories and books have been introduced during story hours, includ-

ing nonfiction ones. The programs are planned for various ages: toddlers, preschoolers, school-age children, and parents; even senior citizens have been involved. One program provided storytelling for children in one room, for their parents in another. For the "pajama story hour," children come to the library already dressed for bed. Story hours have also been broadcast on cable television.

In the state survey it was found that 73% of the libraries have film programs for children; the average number per library in a year is 18. Libraries serving smaller populations have fewer film programs per year than those libraries serving larger populations.[15] From other studies and observations it is known that the quality of film programs varies. The continuum has on one end those for which little thought is given to the selection of the films and on the other end the programs that involve children in discussions about the content of the films as well as filmming techniques.

Summer reading clubs are sponsored by 73% of the libraries.[16] For over a decade there has been a state-wide plan to encourage summer reading programs; the Illinois State Library has assisted with the funding. A theme is chosen each year and materials (posters, reading charts, certificates, bookmarks, stickers, and manuals) made available. The theme this year is "Open Books, Open Doors." Each library that participates determines how it will utilize the materials and the nature of the specific projects, activities, and rewards that will be a part of the programming.

The state survey found that 45% of the libraries reported visits have been made to schools by the children's librarian.[17] Children's librarians visit schools to give book talks, tell stories, invite teachers and children to use the public library, tell about upcoming programs, distribute registration cards, and to deliver materials to supplement curricula and for leisure reading. Librarians sometimes meet individually with principals, school

librarians, and teachers; other times they prepare programs for classes and assemblies and speak at faculty meetings. Classroom groups also make visits to public libraries. Librarians usually provide orientation programs. Where school libraries are inadequate, public librarians might be called upon to give instruction in library skills and reference work.

Before concluding this section on programming, we must consider briefly the audience that has been the special target of children's services during the past two decades: preschoolers and their parents, as well as others who take care of or teach these young children. In the 1960s federal monies prompted the rapid increase in development of elementary school libraries. Many public libraries at the same time shifted emphasis to preschoolers. In some libraries children no longer had to be able to read or sign their names to get library cards. Collections of materials about child growth and development were placed in the children's area. Some libraries sent packets of information to mothers of the newborn. More recently mothers have returned to work sooner, no longer waiting for children to go to school (or finish school) before seeking employment. This has necessitated agencies to take care of children during working hours. Day-care centers and nursery schools have cropped up everywhere. Most have need for information about books and book-related activities, as well as books themselves. Efforts have been made by children's librarians to serve these agencies, many of which are privately owned.

The specific nature of programs is probably the most fascinating of all. I can but begin a list: author programs (children as authors and published writers talking with children), health fairs, art and craft activities, hobby shows, field trips, innovations in orientation tours and talks, computer clubs, dinner theatre, and competitions--from break dancing to knowledge of children's books. Just one more, which is exemplary of those responding to

societal concerns: Interest in the United States has been heightened with regard to kidnapped and runaway children. From news media to milk cartons, the populous is alerted to the problem. Some public libraries, and often in cooperation with local police stations, have arranged for photographing and/or fingerprinting children, thereby helping to create a national network for locating missing children.

Another state association has recently prepared a publication to assist children's librarians in developing their local goals and objectives. It seems fitting to quote here the introductory paragraph of the programming section. "Well planned programs are a vital part of total library service. They enrich the basic program of service, stimulate present users, attract non-users to the library, reinforce and increase materials circulation, and keep the library as a focal point of the community."[18]

In drawing this paper to a close allow me to suggest that "the universal availability of information" begins with such specific matters as interlibrary loan for children, which reportedly has been accomplished in Illinois, and moves to networking (the various ways libraries are "connected"). Links in Illinois were first forged among public libraries but now school, academic, and special libraries have joined the network. Theoretically, the information contained in all these libraries is available to the child in need of it. The very early connections of this network were made in informal exchanges among determined people. Such an opportunity is really, also, ours at this conference. And, if we work at it, we shall eventually see libraries playing a vital role in making information universally available, for all people--including children.

Although I have attempted to give an overview of children's services of public libraries in the United States by quoting some underlying principles, reporting an emphasis on programs, and picturing the diversity, I have touched

but a few surfaces of a many-faceted subject. I have not dwelt upon categories of child users--gifted, handicapped, latchkey, new immigrants, for example. The children's librarian as a member of the management team has been neglected, as well as the qualifications, competencies, and responsibilities expected of this "superwoman" and the academic preparation that fortifies her and continuing education that keeps her in shape. Much discussed as of late, and omitted here, is the use of microcomputers--how they can facilitate library operations and how their software (programs) can become a part of the library's offerings for children. The necessity for a continuous, effective public relations program and the brochures and displays that are a small part of such efforts have been slighted. The nonprint materials, the toys and games, that are available in library collections and the professional reference sources useful to librarians and other adults in developing and mining collections have been ignored in this paper. The few experiments with integrated shelving of nonfiction for children and adults and the body of research about children's reading would probably have been of interest. And, no mention has been made of organizations and activities with an international bent.

I was asked to make comments about the future. I enjoy doing that in imaginative ways, but with restraint I opine (reflecting my interest in time fantasy) that the future is within the present, which grew out of the past,--or, matters I've spoken of today are likely to be in evidence in some ways (large and small) in a status report of 1995.

Notes

1. Goals, Guidelines, and Standards Committee, Public Library Association, American Library Association, The Public Library Mission Statement and Its Imperatives for Service (Chicago: American Library Association, 1979), p. 8.

2. Ibid., p. 5.

3. Vernon E. Palmour, Marcia C. Bellassai, and Nancy V. De Wath, A Planning Process for Public Libraries (Chicago: American Library Association, 1980).

4. Harriet G. Long, Rich the Treasure (Chicago: American Library Association, 1953), p. 15.

5. Youth Services Section, New York Library Association, Standards for Youth Services in Public Libraries of New York State (New York: New York Library Association, 1984), p. 1.

6. Herbert Goldhor, "Summary," in Children's Services of Public Libraries, edited by Selma K. Richardson (Urbana-Champaign: Graduate School of Library Science, University of Illinois, 1978), p. 173.

7. Mary Jo Lynch, "Statistics on Library Services to Youth," Top of the News 41 (Winter 1985): 181-83.

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9. Ibid, pp. 25, 136-37, and 138-39.

10. Bill Katz and Ruth A. Fraley, eds., Reference Services for Children and Young Adults (New York: Haworth, 1983). Also published as Spring/Summer 1983 issues of Reference Librarian.

11. Youth Services Section, NYLA, p. 7.

12. Herbert Goldhor, Analysis of Responses to the Public Library Supplemental Annual Report for 1980/81 (Springfield: Illinois State Library, 1982), p. 11.

13. Ibid., p. 24.

14. Ibid., p. 32.

15. Ibid., p. 21.

16. Ibid., p. 24.

17. Ibid., p. 25.

18. Children's Services in Libraries and School Media Centers Division, Ohio Library Association, A Guideline to Planning Public Library Service to Children (Columbus: Ohio Library Association, 1984), p. 26.

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IFLA

1985

IFLA GENERAL CONFERENCE, CHICAGO

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Section: Children's Libraries

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Bocks? We Don't Have Any

A report on the IFLA/Unesco Books For All CO-Action Project

by

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KEYWORD(S):

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BOOKS? WE DON'T HAVE ANY:

A report on the IFLA/UNESCO Books For All Co-Action Project.

I am the person appointed by the Children's Libraries Section of IFLA to administer a special project aimed at enabling libraries and organisations in book-needy countries to obtain children's books appropriate to their need.

Listen to this letter from an America Peace Corps Volunteer in Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa. "I am sure that you aware of the fact that children's books in Liberia are at a premium. We just don't have any. I have been told that you have a way of providing coupons that can be redeemed at a local bookstore to purchase children's books. I would appreciate anything that you can do for me. I am a retired teacher from the US: 64 years old and really enjoying being a volunteer in Liberia."

In many countries when we feel like reading or we want our children to read, we have access to a number of sources - public libraries, school libraries, bookshops. In many countries children's education gives the skill of reading and there are plenty of resources to practice with. They can USE and develop that skill.

Many countries have thousands of children's book titles from which to choose, relevant to age, ability and interest, whether fiction or non-fiction. They range from picture books for the youngest to literary novels for teenagers, and from the simplest information book to specialist information books for children. There are books of particular

interest to boys and those of interest to girls. There are books that appeal to both boys and girls. There may be many individuals and organisations dedicated to promoting children's books and reading.

But in many countries there are difficulties in teaching children to read and in supplying books to encourage them to practice reading, to enjoy reading and to benefit from the advantages of reading, such as stimulating the imagination, widening experience, increasing vocabulary, providing information, insight and understanding.

Letters of request for aid give a picture of some of the difficulties.

From the Philippines: "Our town is in the northernmost tip of Dinagat islands reachable only by water transportation from our capital city, as no roads connect our town to and from the capital. This means we need more reading materials for when our people are free from their agricultural and other avocations."

Another request came from another Philippine island: "The people of Poro are trying to set up a public library. The mayor has agreed to set aside a room in the town hall to serve as a library. He has also volunteered to assign one of his clerks to work there part-time as a librarian, thus supplying the salary out of municipal funds. A ten member library committee has been formed to raise money for shelves, tables and chairs and to pay incidental expenses of the library. The committee has already planned some fund raising events, and I am writing to you for help with funds for children's books."

From Peru (written in Spanish): "We, the National Library Service of Peru, have some firm projects for cultural development in the border areas of Peru and are very interested in receiving contributions towards children's books."

From Tonga in the South Pacific: "My school serves four villages. English is the second language, and I am trying to establish a library. There are no public libraries. We have shelves but few books and I am training a Tongan from this village to take over when I leave. I would like the library to eventually serve both the school and the community."

From Haiti: "I am a teacher of the deaf at this Centre for the Deaf Child. None of the boys and girls has or had a textbook and we are in great need of children's books written in French at the primary level."

From Indonesia: "We rely heavily on public donations to buy new books and in a country such as ours people cannot afford to give much money. There are more and more children eager to read and learn (especially Indonesian books) but we have a limited stock. We thank you from the bottom of our heartsfor your support so that we can grow to meet the ever increasing demands of all people seeking to be educated."

From the Gambia, West Africa: "Two small communities here feel the need for a nursery school and with self help initiative we have started one for 35 children aged 4 - 7 years. Gambian children enter primary school at the age of 8. One of our problems is the supply of adequate books. We have produced some home-made books but with limited success. The staff would be most grateful if the Books for All programme could assist our children with books."

A short list of the difficulties will give the background to the need for the Books For All project.

1. School is not compulsory, or if it is there are not enough schools, teachers, resources or funds.

2. Education may be in the official language rather than the vernacular and therefore is likely to be the second language and unfamiliar.

3. There are often very few books in the vernacular and in some countries very few in the official language(s).

4. There may be geographical isolation from sources of culture/education/reading.

5. There may be no public libraries within a day's travel and the big town library may be short of books also.

6. The problems of the climate's effects on books, such as heat, monsoons, insects, floods and hurricanes often cause damage and loss.

7. The effects of governments, wars, corruption also affect education, libraries, publishing and the availability of funds.

8. In some areas the school library attempts to serve the local community also, thus increasing the demands upon a small stock of books.

9. Self-help efforts by communities who are already poor in money but rich in hope are often not given any support by local or national government or other organisations.

10. The overall effect is that, while the children may be taught to read there are few books to keep them reading, to develop fluent reading or to provide enjoyment and information.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROJECT

The aim of the IFLA/UNESCO Books For All Project, begun in 1973, is to provide aid to needy countries to develop and extend existing library services to children; to start book provision to children in public libraries, or in other cases to provide children's books through voluntary effort where no formal public libraries exist. The UNESCO Co-operative action programme of which this is a part covers many kinds of help: equipment for education, agriculture, the handicapped, training of women, emergency education for refugees.

My work for IFLA/UNESCO Books For All Project is to obtain donations, to transfer these into UNUMS (UNESCO Units of Money) which are like a coupon or cheque, and to send the unums to places that have asked for aid, so that the recipients can buy children's books in the language

to fit the local needs. The books can be bought in the nearest book-store or ordered from a supplier. The bookseller supplies the books, sends the unums and the invoice to UNESCO HQ in Paris, where the coupons are 'redeemed' by payment in the currency of the country concerned. This avoids mis-use of the unums, prevents possible theft if actual money had been sent, and avoids corruption. It also gives business to the local booksellers and allows a local choice to be made that fits the local needs and interests.

My job is to publicise the Project, to receive donations, to compile a file of requests for aid and to match the donors and donations to the needy areas. It takes an average of 6 hours a week, every week, unpaid. UNESCO pays for the postage, stationery and leaflets. Last year I was able to distribute 10,000 dollars to projects in Ghana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Peru, Philippines, Solomon Islands, Zaire.

Who are the people who donate money or unums to the Books For All Project?

EXAMPLES FROM DONORS' LETTERS.

1. A primary school in England gave the money from their Harvest Festival celebration.

2. An Australian Primary School held a Children's Day, on which they outlined a map of Africa with coins and asked that the resulting amount should be sent to an African country.

3. From Finland the Association of Finnish Libraries collected donations from a network of libraries.

4. The Surrey Public Library in British Columbia, Canada raised money by a gingerbread house raffle in the branch libraries.

5. The Denver, Colorado Steel Center donated the money raised by a literary discussion.

6. Soroptimist Clubs in USA and United Kingdom have been very generous.

7. The Netherlands UNESCO Centre sends donations every year.

8. The UNESCO Association of Japan collects from individuals and organisations in Japan and sends the total to me with messages. For example:
"I run a coffee shop in Osaka. I greatly sympathise with the UNESCO Co-operative Action Programme, so I put a charity box and posters in my shop. Thanks to the goodwill of my customers I can send you our donation of 70 dollars."

Another donation was send by the Japanese parents of a girl who was killed in a road accident with the message that the gift was in memory of [illegible].

9. Two British organisations concerned with Children's Books have decided to make this Project their charity for a year: The Federation of Children's Book Groups (parents, teachers, librarians interested in children's books) and the British Section of IBBY (International Board on Books for Young People.)

10. A retired librarian living in California saw an article I had written about the Books for All Project, and sent a personal cheque.

All of these donors are sent a letter of thanks and their names are put onto the unums sent to the needy countries, so that the recipients can write to thank them.

LETTERS OF THANKS

These are some of the replies I receive:

From the Philippines: "I have been able to buy many books with the unums and the books will soon be in use. It will be good to see the happy faces of children here and the future effects make it all worthwhile. I am grateful that there are organisations like yours to better the world we live in."

From Kenya: "Our library has a small room newly furnished with shelves with a capacity of about 3,000 books, but we only have 120 books. Your

donation will enable us to more than double our stock."

Another from Kenya writes: "We went to Eldoret to choose the books. What an exciting day we had! We bought 76 books and brief list of our purchases for the children aged 13+ [illegible]

1 23 novels by African writers, some in English and 10 in Swahili.

2 14 simplified readers published especially for East Africa for the slow learning children.

3 8 How and Why books about animals and space, etc.

4 5 books in an East African junior agriculture series, which are the most popular of any of the books we bought.

5 7 dictionaries (English-Swahili)

6 8 wonderfully illustrated books about Kenyan wildlife, in simplified English.

This letter contained a letter from a child also.

CONCLUSION

The Books for All project has emphasised the importance of people on the spot being involved in choosing books for their communities' needs.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Otherwise it is rather like someone in another country sending you books for your children - most unlikely that they would be relevant. The scheme also gets round the problem of currency regulations, of corruption and of theft as the unums can only be used to buy children's books and booksellers will only be paid by UNESCO when they have sent a list of books purchased and an invoice.

The need is tremendous and the letters I get are just the tip of an iceberg. IFLA members can help by identifying particular needs in member countries and by encouraging individuals and organisations to make donations to the Project.

The scheme can best be summed up in the words accompanying a donation from an elementary school in Osaka, Japan.

> "We will be happy if our small contribution will be useful in improving education and reading in your country. We are living on the same earth. Let's co-operate with each other."